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FISCAL IMPACT REPORT



SPONSOR: Ponce DATE TYPED: 02/08/02 HB 288/aHAGC

SHORT TITLE: Salt Cedar & Preatophyte Management SB _____

ANALYST: Baca

APPROPRIATION

Appropriation Contained		Estimated Additional Impact		Recurring or Non-Rec	Fund Affected
FY02	FY03	FY02	FY03		
	\$10,000.0			Recurring	General Fund

(Parenthesis) Indicate Expenditure Decreases)

Relates to HB 21, HB 50, HB 104, HB 245 and SB 228

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

Department of Agriculture (NMDA)

SUMMARY

Synopsis of HAGC Amendment

The House Agriculture and Water Resources Committee amendment inserts the word “non-native” before phraetophytes and add the following language:

“In expending these funds, the districts shall ensure that:

- (1) For each management project a management and native vegetation restoration plan are developed, and the districts shall provide public notice of such plans and assessments and shall make them available to the public in district offices and on the internet at least fourteen days before project implementation begins;
- (2) aerial spraying of target areas shall carried out by helicopter only after public notice;
- (3) projects shall be implemented in accordance with best management practices and with the management and native vegetation restoration plan;

- (4) project areas are monitored for a period of at least four years after project implementation to determine any effects of a project on wildlife, water supplies, water quality, vegetation and soil health;
- (5) reports on project implementation and monitoring shall be submitted to the legislature and shall be available to the public in district offices and on the internet; and
- (6) where a site involves threatened or endangered species, project proponents will take action to ensure compliance with applicable federal law and conformance with any duly enacted recovery plan...”

Synopsis of Original Bill

House Bill 288 appropriates \$10 million from the general fund to the Board of Regents of New Mexico State University to support soil and water conservation districts' efforts to manage salt cedar and other phreatophytes to restore native vegetation and enhance water supplies and wildlife habitat in the Pecos River Basin

Significant Issues

According to NMDA, salt cedar and other non-native species vegetation have degraded endangered species habitat as well as complicating New Mexico's ability to meet its compact delivery obligations due to high water consumption rates associated with salt cedar. Soil and water conservation districts are uniquely situated and qualified to make significant progress in the removal and control of salt cedar and other non-native vegetative species.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

The appropriation of \$10.0 contained in this bill is a recurring expense to the general fund. Any unexpended or unencumbered balance remaining at the end of FY2003 shall revert top the general fund.

ADMINISTRATIVE IMPLICATIONS

The Department of Agriculture will serve as fiscal agent for the program.

CONFLICT/DUPLICATION/COMPANIONSHIP/RELATIONSHIP

House Bill 288 relates to HB 21, HB 50, HB 245 and SB 228. HB 245 is different in scale and in the specific area of focus., the Middle Rio Grande Conservancy District. HB 50 and SB 228 are companion bills, each making an appropriation of \$300,000 from the general fund to be used for salt cedar and other phreatophyte control anywhere in the state. HB 21 provides \$100,000 for salt cedar and other non-native vegetation control in the northeastern portion of the state.

OTHER SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES

The following information is provided for information only. It is not intended as a commentary on the merits of the bill.

The request was not included in NMSU' budget request, and, consequently, was not reviewed by the CHE.

LB/ar:njw